

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image output control apparatus which is connected to an input device inputting image data and plural image output devices through a communication medium, and can control image output of the plural image output devices, comprising:

first setting means for setting the total number of output copies when the image data is output by the plural image output devices;

10 first storage means for storing distribution priority order for distributing the total number of output copies set by said first setting means to the plural image output devices; and

control means for performing control to distribute 15 the total number of output copies to the respective image output devices outputting the image data, on the basis of the distribution priority order.

2. An apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising second storage means for storing a limitation value for limiting the number of distribution copies in the total number of output copies for each image output device,

wherein said control means performs the control to 25 distribute the total number of output copies to the image output devices outputting the image data, on the basis of the limitation values and the distribution

TESTED 65/TSV/60
04/1981

priority order.

3. An apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein,
when the total number of output copies is smaller than
5 the sum of the limitation values of the image output
devices outputting the image data, said control means
performs the control to distribute to each image output
device the number of output copies equal to the
limitation value of this image output device, in the
10 order of the image output device of high distribution
priority order.

4. An apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein,
when the total number of output copies is smaller than
15 the limitation value of the image output device of
which distribution priority order is highest in the
image output devices outputting the image data, said
control means performs the control to distribute the
total number of output copies only to the image output
20 device of which distribution priority order is highest.

5. An apparatus according to Claim 2, further
comprising:

25 display means for displaying information
concerning the distribution priority order; and
second setting means for setting the distribution
priority order for each image output device in

TO8700-05479460

accordance with operator's input based on the information displayed on said display means, wherein said first storage means stores the distribution priority order set by said setting means.

5

6. An apparatus according to Claim 5, further comprising:

registration means for grouping the set values of the distribution priority order for each image output device set by said second setting means, giving a group name to the grouped set values, and registering them; and

third storage means for storing the registration information registered by said registration means, wherein said second setting means sets the distribution priority order of each image output device on the basis of the registration information stored in said third storage means, in accordance with designation of the group name by an operator.

20

7. An apparatus according to Claim 6, wherein said display means can simultaneously display the plural group names stored in said third storage means, and said second setting means sets the distribution priority order for each image output device on the basis of the registration information stored in said third storage means, according as any one of the plural

TO85110 = 05/27/97/00

group names displayed by said display means is selected by the operator.

8. An image output control method which controls
5 image output by plural image output devices connected to an input device inputting image data through a communication medium, said method comprising:

a first setting step of setting the total number of output copies when the image data is output by the
10 plural image output devices; and
a control step of performing control to distribute the total number of output copies to the respective image output devices outputting the image data, on the basis of the distribution priority order previously stored in a memory and for distributing the total
15 number of output copies set in said first setting step to the plural image output devices.

9. A method according to Claim 8, wherein said
20 control step performs the control to distribute the total number of output copies to the image output devices outputting the image data, on the basis of limitation values previously stored in the memory and for limiting the number of distribution copies in the
25 total number of output copies for each image output device, and the distribution priority order.

TOKYO 65478760

10. A method according to Claim 9, wherein, when
the total number of output copies is smaller than the
sum of the limitation values of the image output
devices outputting the image data, said control step
5 performs the control to distribute to each image output
device the number of output copies equal to the
limitation value of this image output device, in the
order of the image output device of high distribution
priority order.

10
11. A method according to Claim 9, wherein, when
the total number of output copies is smaller than the
limitation value of the image output device of which
distribution priority order is highest in the image
15 output devices outputting the image data, said control
step performs the control to distribute the total
number of output copies only to the image output device
of which distribution priority order is highest.

20
12. A method according to Claim 9, further
comprising:
a display step of displaying information
concerning the distribution priority order on a
display; and
25
a second setting step of setting the distribution
priority order for each image output device in
accordance with operator's input based on the

TO8FT01-65ZFSZ60

information displayed on the display in said display step,

wherein the distribution priority order set in said setting step is stored in a memory.

5

13. A method according to Claim 12, further comprising:

a registration step of grouping the set values of the distribution priority order for each image output device set in said second setting step, giving a group name to the grouped set values, registering them, and storing thus obtained registration information in the memory,

wherein said second setting step sets the distribution priority order of each image output device on the basis of the registration information stored in the memory, in accordance with designation of the group name by an operator.

TOKUYO-65479460

or

20 14. An ^{method} ~~apparatus~~ according to Claim 13, wherein said display step can simultaneously display on the display the plural group names stored in the memory in said registration step, and said second setting step sets the distribution priority order for each image output device on the basis of the registration information stored in the memory in said registration step, according as any one of the plural group names

00000000000000000000000000000000
displayed in said display step is selected by the operator.

15. A storage medium which stores a program code
5 of a computer which performs an image output control process to control image output by plural image output devices connected to an input device inputting image data through a communication medium, comprising:

a code for performing a first setting process of
10 setting the total number of output copies when the image data is output by the plural image output devices; and

a code for performing a control process of performing control to distribute the total number of
15 output copies to the respective image output devices outputting the image data, on the basis of the distribution priority order previously stored in a memory and for distributing the total number of output copies set in said first setting process to the plural
20 image output devices.

16. An image output control apparatus which is connected to an input device inputting image data and plural image output devices through a communication medium, and can control image output of the plural image output devices, comprising:
25 first setting means for setting the total number

000744757479760

of output copies when the image data is output by the plural image output devices;

5 first storage means for storing distribution priority order for distributing the total number of output copies set by said first setting means to the plural image output devices;

10 second storage means for storing a limitation value for limiting the number of distribution copies in the total number of output copies set by said first setting means, for each image output device; and
15 control means for performing control to distribute the total number of output copies to the respective image output devices outputting the image data, on the basis of the distribution priority order and the limitation values.

17. An apparatus according to Claim 16, wherein, when the total number of output copies is smaller than the sum of the limitation values of the image output devices outputting the image data, said control means performs the control to distribute to each image output device the number of output copies equal to the limitation value of this image output device, in the order of the image output device of high distribution priority order.
25

18. An apparatus according to Claim 16, wherein,

when the total number of output copies is smaller than
the limitation value of the image output device of
which distribution priority order is highest in the
image output devices outputting the image data, said
5 control means performs the control to distribute the
total number of output copies only to the image output
device of which distribution priority order is highest.

19. An apparatus according to Claim 16, further
10 comprising:

display means for displaying information
concerning the distribution priority order; and
second setting means for setting the distribution
priority order for each image output device in
15 accordance with operator's input based on the
information displayed on said display means,
wherein said first storage means stores the
distribution priority order set by said setting means.

20 20. An apparatus according to Claim 19, further
comprising:

registration means for grouping the set values of
the distribution priority order for each image output
device set by said second setting means, giving a group
25 name to the grouped set values, and registering them;
and
third storage means for storing the registration

TOSATO-65/IT9/60

information registered by said registration means,
wherein said second setting means sets the
distribution priority order of each image output device
on the basis of the registration information stored in
5 said third storage means, in accordance with
designation of the group name by an operator.

21. An apparatus according to Claim 20, wherein
said display means can simultaneously display the
10 plural group names stored in said third storage means,
and said second setting means sets the distribution
priority order for each image output device on the
basis of the registration information stored in said
third storage means, according as any one of the plural
15 group names displayed by said display means is selected
by the operator.

22. An image output control method which controls
image output by plural image output devices connected
20 to an input device inputting image data through a
communication medium, said method comprising:
 a first setting step of setting the total number
 of output copies when the image data is output by the
 plural image output devices; and
25 a control step of performing control to distribute
 the total number of output copies to the respective
 image output devices outputting the image data, on the

TO8710-65279260

basis of distribution priority order previously stored
in a memory and for distributing the total number of
output copies to the plural image output devices and
limitation values previously stored in the memory and
for limiting the number of distribution copies in the
total number of output copies for each image output
device.

23. A method according to Claim 22, wherein, when
the total number of output copies is smaller than the
sum of the limitation values of the image output
devices outputting the image data, said control step
performs the control to distribute to each image output
device the number of output copies equal to the
limitation value of this image output device, in the
order of the image output device of high distribution
priority order.

24. A method according to Claim 22, wherein, when
the total number of output copies is smaller than the
limitation value of the image output device of which
distribution priority order is highest in the image
output devices outputting the image data, said control
step performs the control to distribute the total
number of output copies only to the image output device
of which distribution priority order is highest.

TOP SECRET//SI//FO

25. A method according to Claim 22, further comprising:

a display step of displaying information concerning the distribution priority order on a

5 display; and

a second setting step of setting the distribution priority order for each image output device in accordance with operator's input based on the information displayed on the display in said display

10 step,

wherein the distribution priority order set in said setting step is stored in a memory.

26. A method according to Claim 25, further
15 comprising:

a registration step of grouping the set values of the distribution priority order for each image output device set in said second setting step, giving a group name to the grouped set values, registering them, and
20 storing thus obtained registration information in the memory,

wherein said second setting step sets the distribution priority order of each image output device on the basis of the registration information stored in
25 the memory, in accordance with designation of the group name by an operator.

TO8740-657T9/60

27. An apparatus according to Claim 26, wherein
said display step can simultaneously display on the
display the plural group names stored in the memory in
said registration step, and said second setting step
5 sets the distribution priority order for each image
output device on the basis of the registration
information stored in the memory in said registration
step, according as any one of the plural group names
displayed in said display step is selected by the
10 operator.

28. A storage medium which stores a program code
of a computer which performs an image output control
process to control image output by plural image output
15 devices connected to an input device inputting image
data through a communication medium, comprising:
a code for performing a first setting process of
setting the total number of output copies when the
image data is output by the plural image output
20 devices; and
a code for performing a control step of performing
control to distribute the total number of output copies
to the respective image output devices outputting the
image data, on the basis of distribution priority order
25 previously stored in a memory and for distributing the
total number of output copies to the plural image
output devices and limitation values previously stored

TOP SECRET - 65479460

in the memory and for limiting the number of distribution copies in the total number of output copies for each image output device.

TG8TTO-65479460